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Special Bulletin A
Misplaced Cesium 137 Gauge
Urps Iron and Metal Co.
Davy, McDowell County, WV 24828
Attention: Dennis Carney, Charlie Kleeman, John Riley, RRC
Date: June 6th, 1996

Determination of Threat, Activation of Funding and Authorization
for EPA Contractors to Arrange for Transportation and Proper
Disposal of the Misplaced Cesium 137 Gauge

I. Situation and Background

A. A Point Level Gauge (Serial No. 75691) containing approximately 500 millicuries of Cesium 137 is currently being stored at Urps Iron and Metal Co. in Davy, WV. Urps Iron and Metal purchased the gauge from a scrap dealer when the original licensee, Benafuels Inc., McComas, WV went bankrupt in 1989.

On March 13, 1995, Steel of West Virginia notified Region II US NRC that a shipment of scrap from Urps had set off radiation monitors and that fortunately the gauge was not smelted. A Region II Materials inspector went to Urps Iron and Metal Co. on April 20, 1995 and found the gauge stored in a barrel inside a locked fence area. The inspector provided Radiation Material postings and took measurements, which were less than 2mr/hour at the barrel surface. The inspector contacted the manufacturer of the gauge, Ronan Engineering Co., Florence, Kentucky and was advised that they used a contractor to recover the gauges and that the minimum cost for this was \$1200-5000. Mr. Urps stated that he could not afford to absorb this cost. This situation was referred to EPA Region III on June 4th, 1996.

II. Actions Taken

A. The OSC has made a determination that a public health and environmental threat exists if the abandoned Cesium gauge is not taken into regulatory possession and properly disposed of as soon as possible. The OSC has used his \$50,000 funding authority to arrange for transportation and disposal of the gauge. The OSC has allocated \$20,000 for Emergency Response Contractors, \$5,000 for EPA and \$5,000 for SATA.

III. Future Plans

A. ERCS will arrange for the gauge to be transported to the original manufacturer or a disposal facility on Tuesday, June 11th, 1996.

Walter Lee, OSC
US EPA Region III

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